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DE RUEHKO #0414 0260345
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P 260345Z JAN 06
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7809
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUCPDOG/USDOC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUYNAAAC/COMNAVFORJAPAN YOKOSUKA JA PRIORITY
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY
RHHMHBA/COMPACFLT PEARL HARBOR HI//N541// PRIORITY
RHMFIUU/HQ PACAF HICKAM AFB HI//CC/PA// PRIORITY
RUHBANB/OKINAWA FLD OFC US FORCES JAPAN CP BUTLER JA PRIORITY
RHMFIUU/COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA AB JA PRIORITY
INFO RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA 4197
RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE 7250
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 0188
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 0833
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 6372
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 8516
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC

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STATE FOR I/RF, PA/PR/FPC/W, IIP/G/EA, EAP/PD, R/MR,
EAP/J, EAP/P, PM;
USTR FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE;
TREASURY FOR OASIA/IMI;
SECDEF FOR OASD/PA;
CP BUTLER OKINAWA FOR AREA FIELD OFFICE;
PACOM HONOLULU FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY ADVISOR

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION US-JAPAN SECURITY - TOKYO

LEAD STORIES: Most Thursday morning papers front-paged reports concerning the ongoing investigation into alleged improprieties by Livedoor Co., as well as a GOJ damage estimate for possible major earthquakes on the Pacific side of northern Japan. The estimate showed that up to 2,700 people could be killed in a "worst-case" scenario.

11. "GOJ Should Seriously Take into Account the Will of Nago Residents" An editorial in the liberal Mainichi commented (1/26): "The GOJ should sit at the negotiating table and respond sincerely to the feelings of Nago residents.... The government has welcomed the victory of former Nago Municipal Assembly Speaker Yoshikazu Shimabukuro in the recent mayoral election as a 'foothold' for facilitating talks with local officials concerning the relocation of the Futenma Marine heliport to the shoreline of Camp Schwab in Nago City.... Nevertheless, there is little reason to believe that negotiations will proceed smoothly. Shimabukuro has already made clear that he will not accept the relocation plan unless it is modified. The current plan will not result in an expansion of military bases, and it will have less impact on the environment than the proposal to construct a heliport on reclaimed land. Local residents, though, are concerned about helicopter noise and accidents, and there is strong opposition there to the transfer.

12. "There is little chance that Shimabukuro will move immediately to accept the plan, and Futenma relocation is not a problem for Nago alone. Okinawa Governor Inamine, who supported Shimabukuro in the election, is strongly opposed to the plan, and he wields a great deal of influence and authority on the matter. The GOJ has taken great pains to harmonize the maintenance of US military

deterrence and a reduction in Okinawa's base burden. Although Futenma relocation will reduce Okinawa's security burden, it will undeniably place a burden on Nago....

13. "The implementation of base realignment is largely premised on the GOJ's ability to win over local residents. Now that the citizens of Nago have elected Shimabukuro, who has called for the Futenma relocation plan to be modified to make it acceptable to local residents, the GOJ should take the time to discuss modifications to the plan if necessary. The central government will consider measures for promoting regional development, including economic revitalization, in a manner commensurate with the burden to be imposed, as well it should.... The end-of-March deadline for compiling a final report on US force transformation and base realignment is approaching. The central government needs to accelerate consultations with local residents, while seeking national support and understanding."

SCHIEFFER